

2nd Thessalonians

Correction of Doctrinal Error [2:1-12]

- Rapture versus Day of the Lord [2:1-2]
 - Now with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we request of you, brethren,
Ἐρωτῶμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡμῶν ἐπισυναγωγῆς ἐπ’ αὐτὸν
 - The word “request” is from **ἐρωτάω** (erōtaō) which means “ask” or “request”.
 - This word is used here of asking for something, but the content of that request is mentioned in verse 2.
 - Because of this, we will move this entire phrase to the end of this verse.
 - We will also change the word request to “request of”.
 - The word “coming” is from **παρουσία** (parousia) which means “coming” or “presence”.
 - This word is used here of Jesus Christ returning to the earth.
 - The phrase “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” is a clear reference to the 2nd Advent of Jesus Christ.
 - This future event occurs during the eschatological period known as the Day of the Lord.
 - The phrase “gathering together” is from **ἐπισυναγωγή** (episunagōgē) which means “gathering/assembling together”.
 - The only other occurrence of this word in the N.T. is in Heb 10:25 which speaks of members of the Church assembling together.
 - Here, this word is part of the phrase “our gathering together to Him”.
 - This is a reference to the gathering together of the Church to meet Christ in the air at the Rapture event.
 - Paul refers to the Thessalonians as “brethren” – a term of affection acknowledging them as his brothers & sisters in Christ.
 - As we have seen before, Paul uses this term to emphasize his kinship with the believers in Thessalonica.
 - that you not be easily shaken from your composure
εἰς τὸ μὴ ταχέως σαλευθῆναι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ νοῦς
 - The word “quickly” is **ταχέως** (tacheōs) which means “quickly” or “hastily”.
 - This word is used here of something happening too quickly in the sense of being too easy to do.
 - We will translate this as “easily”.
 - The word “shaken” is from **σαλεύω** (saleuō) which means “waver”, “shake” or “disturb”.

- This word can be used of typical things shaking [Luke 7:24; Acts 16:25-26], but it is used here of being knocked off of course mentally because of inner turbulence.
- The word “composure” is from **νοῦς** (nous) which means “mind”, “intellect” or “attitude”.
- This word is used here of a state of mind – in this case a calmness of mind – which denotes the idea of “sensibly” or “composure”.
- or be alarmed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, claiming that the day of the Lord is already here.
 μηδὲ θροεῖσθαι, μήτε διὰ πνεύματος μήτε διὰ λόγου μήτε δι’ ἐπιστολῆς ὡς δι’ ἡμῶν, ὡς ὅτι ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου.
 - The word “disturbed” is from **θροέω** (throeō) which means “disturbed” or “frightened”.
 - This word is used here of being frightened or alarmed and we will translate this as “alarmed”.
 - The first thing that might frighten the Thessalonians was a “spirit” of some kind.
 - This is clearly a reference to a fallen angel or demon that might try to influence these believers.
 - The second thing that might frighten the Thessalonians was “a message or a letter as if from us”.
 - The “message” refers to a spoken message as opposed to a written letter.
 - The phrase “to the effect that” is literally “as though”.
 - The meaning here is that a spirit or some sort of message is making this claim.
 - We will translate this as “claiming that”.
 - The phrase “the day of the Lord” refers to the end time which has been prophesied many times in the O.T.
 - The N.T. helps us understand that this period runs from the signing of the covenant to the end of the Millennial Kingdom.
 - The phrase “has come” is from **ἐνίστημι** (enistēmi) which means “be at hand”, “arrive” or “come”.
 - This word describes something that is imminent or already happening, so we will translate this as “is already here”.

- Principles of 2nd Thessalonians 2:1-2
 - Even though Church-age believers will not experience the events of the Tribulation, it is important for us to understand Biblical eschatology so we will not be easily confused regarding the signs of the times or misled by false teaching.
 - Paul had already taught the Thessalonians that the Church will be saved from the wrath of the Tribulation when Jesus comes to get the Church at the Rapture [1 Thess 1:10; 4:16-17].
 - Paul had also taught the Thessalonians about the Day of the Lord [1 Thess 5:1-3] which includes the 7-year Tribulation period.
 - Near the end of that 7-year period, Jesus Christ will return to the earth to judge unbelievers and establish His kingdom on earth.
 - It appears that someone had led the Thessalonians to believe that the Day of the Lord was already happening in their time.
 - Rapture
 - For the Church only [1 Thess 4:16]
 - A mystery previously unknown [1 Cor 15:51-52]
 - Jesus does not come to the earth [1 Thess 4:17]
 - Believers receive their resurrection bodies [1 Cor 15:53-54]
 - Christ is the Bridegroom [John 3:29]
 - The earth's environment is unaffected
 - 2nd Advent
 - A worldwide event [Matt 24:29-30]
 - A prophesied event [Zech 14:4]
 - Jesus comes to the earth [Matt 25:31]
 - Unbelievers receive their due judgment [Matt 25:32ff]
 - Christ is the King and Judge [Rev 17:14; 19:16; Isa 33:22]
 - The earth's environment is changed [Micah 1:3-4]
 - By understanding these things clearly, we will not be easily shaken from our composure.
 - If we trust in the Lord and trust what His word teaches us about future events, we will remain steadfast in mind [Isa 26:3].
 - Even though we may encounter people who try to stir things up [Acts 17:13], Jesus has promised us His peace if we trust in Him [John 14:1, 27].

- Rapture before Man of Lawlessness [2:3-5]
 - Let no one in any way deceive you, for *the Day of the Lord will not come* unless the Rapture comes first,

Μή τις ὑμᾶς ἐξαπατήσῃ κατὰ μηδένα τρόπον. ὅτι ἐὰν μὴ ἔλθῃ ἡ ἀποστασία πρῶτον

 - The word “deceive” is from **ἐξαπατάω** (exapataō) which means “cheat” or “deceive”.
 - This word describes causing someone to accept false ideas about something [Ro 7:11; 16:18; 1 Co 3:18; 2 Co 11:3; 1 Ti 2:14].
 - The phrase “it will not come” was added by the NASB translators.
 - This phrase helps the sentence read better because in this verse Paul is describing what must take place before the Day of the Lord will occur.
 - The word “apostasy” is **ἀποστασία** (apostasia) which means “departure”.
 - The NASB translators have taken this to mean a departure from the faith.
 - The only other occurrence of this word in the N.T. is found in Acts 21:21.
 - In that context, they are saying that Paul was teaching the Jews to depart from the teaching of Moses found in the Law.
 - In this context, the definite article **ἡ** (hē) is present, so we are talking about a specific departure, not in general terms.
 - This whole discussion, starting in verse 1, is written to clarify the timing of the Rapture versus the Day of the Lord.
 - Therefore, considering the context, this phrase is talking about the departure of Church-age saints at the Rapture.
 - We will take some liberties and translate this as “the Rapture” for the purposes of clarity.
 - The phrase “comes first” makes it very clear that, in God’s timeline for history, the Rapture will precede the Day of the Lord.
 - and *then* the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

καὶ ἀποκαλυφθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας,

 - The phrase “and the man of lawlessness is revealed” tells us about another event that must occur before the Day of the Lord.
 - This phrase is used here to delineate a sequence of events meaning that the Rapture comes first, and then this occurs.
 - Two phrases are used to describe the person in view – “the man of lawlessness” and “the son of destruction”.
 - Both of these phrases refer to the Antichrist (the Beast of Revelation).
 - The phrase “the son of destruction” is also used of Judas Iscariot in John 17:12.
 - This phrase comes from a Hebrew idiom meaning one destined for destruction.
 - The word “revealed” is from **ἀποκαλύπτω** (apokaluptō) which means “reveal”, “disclose” or “bring to light”.
 - This tells us that the Antichrist will come to prominence (become well known) prior to the Day of the Lord.

- who opposes God and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, ὁ ἀντικείμενος καὶ ὑπεραιρόμενος ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα,
 - The word “opposes” is from **ἀντίκειμαι** (antikemai) which means “be in opposition to”.
 - The one being opposed is not given explicitly here, but from the context it is clear that God is in view.
 - The phrase “exalts himself” is from **ὑπεραίρω** (hyperairō) which means “rise up” or “exalt oneself”.
 - This word describes having an undue sense of one’s self-importance or self-worth [2 Cor 12:7].
 - The phrase “every so-called god” is literally “everything called a god”.
 - This would include people, angels, inanimate objects, etc.
 - The phrase “object of worship” is **σέβασμα** (sebasma) which means “devotional object” or “object of worship”.
 - This brings into view things that may not be referred to as a god, but are objects of worship, nonetheless.
- with the result that he takes the seat of authority in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσει ἀποδεικνύντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἐστὶν θεός.
 - The phrase “so that” is **ὥστε** (hōste) which means “for this reason” or “so that”.
 - This word is used here to describe something that comes about as a result of what was described before.
 - The phrase “takes his seat” is from **καθίζω** (kathizō) which means “sit down” or “take a seated position”.
 - It is clear from the context that this word is being used here of taking a seat and claiming authority.
 - The phrase “in the temple of God” is a reference to a future temple that will be rebuilt in Jerusalem.
 - This is not a figurative temple of some kind, but an actual temple that exists during the Tribulation as implied by Dan 9:27.
 - The word “displaying” is from **ἀποδείκνυμι** (apodeiknumi) which means “show forth”, “display” or “proclaim”.
 - This word means to display oneself for public recognition as a way of proclaiming oneself to be someone or something.
 - This entire description details what is known as the abomination of desolation [Dan 11:31; 12:11].
 - Jesus spoke about this event as something that was still yet future during His 1st Advent [Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14].

- Do you not recall that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?
Οὐ μνημονεύετε ὅτι ἔτι ὄν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ταῦτα ἔλεγον ὑμῖν;
 - The word “remember” is from **μνημονεύω** (mnēmoneuō) which means “keep in mind”, “think of” or “remember”.
 - This was the word we saw translated as “recall” in 1 Thess 2:9.
 - We will use the same translation here.
 - The phrase “while I was still with you” refers to the visit Paul made to Thessalonica during his 2nd missionary journey prior to the writing of 1st Thessalonians.
 - We do not know exactly how long Paul was there, but we do know that he led them to Christ and taught them quite a bit of doctrine.
 - The phrase “was telling” is from **λέγω** (legō) which means “say” or “tell”.
 - This word is in the imperfect tense, indicating that this was an ongoing activity while Paul was in Thessalonica.
 - The phrase “these things” refers to the teaching regarding the Rapture and the Day of the Lord.
 - This seems to indicate that Paul had taught these end-times subjects more than once.
- Principles of 2nd Thessalonians 2:3-5
 - As believers, we should be aware that there will be people who will try to deceive us [Eph 5:6; Col 2:8].
 - This was true during the stewardship of Israel as well [Jer 14:14; 29:8-9].
 - Our greatest defense against being deceived is to grow spiritually so that we will be grounded in God’s truth [Eph 4:14-16; 6:11].
 - We should not allow ourselves to be deceived into believing that we will experience the events of the Day of the Lord.
 - We can be confident that the Rapture will occur before the Day of the Lord and we shall be delivered [1 Thess 1:10].
 - After the Rapture has taken place, the Antichrist will be revealed [1 John 2:22; Rev 13:5-8].
 - The Antichrist will arrogantly oppose God in everything that he does [Rev 13:5-6].
 - He will also oppose believers and be worshipped by unbelievers [Rev 13:7-8].
 - The Antichrist will exalt himself above every object of worship and claim to be God after the pattern of Satan [Isa 14:13-14].
 - Pastors should teach the flock of God among them [1 Pet 5:2] about these things so they will know the Church’s place in God’s A to Ω timeline.
 - The congregation should learn these things and keep them in mind so they are not rattled (knocked off course) by current events or the elaborate musings of false teachers.

- The Restrainer [2:6-7]

- And you know what restrains him now, so that in his own time he will be revealed.
καὶ νῦν τὸ κατέχον οἶδατε εἰς τὸ ἀποκαλυφθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ καιρῷ.
- The conjunction “And” connects this verse with the previous section which discussed the man of lawlessness.
- The phrase “you know” indicates that one of the things Paul had told them (v. 6) was what restrains the man of lawlessness.
- The phrase “what restrains” is **τὸ κατέχον** (to katechon).
- This phrase is in the neuter gender, thus translated “what”.
- The word **κατέχον** (katechon) means “restrain” or “hold in check” and describes preventing someone from exercising power.
- The word “now” indicates that this is taking place during the present stewardship of the Church.
- This means that the restraint is related to some unique aspect of the Church age.
- The phrase “so that” introduces a purpose clause describing why the restraint is currently in place.
- The phrase “in his time” is literally “in his own time” meaning that the man of lawlessness has a designated time in God’s plan.
- The word “time” is from **καιρός** (kairos) which describes a time period or appropriate time, not clock time.
- The word “revealed” is from **ἀποκαλύπτω** (apokaluptō) which we saw before to mean his coming to prominence.
- This means that Satan will not bring the Antichrist to prominence while the restraint prevents him from exercising his power.
- We already know that the Antichrist must be revealed before the Day of the Lord (including the Tribulation) comes (v. 3).
- For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work;
τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας.
- The word “mystery” is from **μυστήριον** (mustērion) which means “secret” or “unrevealed”.
- The phrase “the mystery of lawlessness” describes something occurring that was not revealed in the O.T.
- Even though the man of lawlessness has not yet been revealed, lawlessness is already present.
- The phrase “is already at work” tells us that this lawlessness already existed in the 1st century as it does today.
- Since this is a mystery, it is not the same thing as the lawlessness of the O.T.
- It is also not the lawlessness that will occur when the man of lawlessness is revealed – it is a type of that lawlessness.

- He who alone restrains at the present time *will do so* until He is taken out of the way.
μόνον ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται.
 - The word “only” is from **μόνος** (monos) which means “only” or “alone”.
 - This word describes being the only entity in a class here.
 - We will translate this as “alone” and move it in the sentence.
 - The word “now” is **ἄρτι** (arti) which means “now” or “at the present time”.
 - This is a different Greek word than the “now” (**νῦν**) in verse 6.
 - To differentiate this, we will translate this as “at the present time” and we will move it in the sentence for clarity.
 - The phrase “he who ... restrains” is ὁ κατέχων (ho katechōn) which refers to the restrainer as “he” here instead of “what”.
 - This is the exact same restrainer mentioned in verse 6.
 - This makes it clear that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit who is sometimes referred to in the neuter [John 14:26; 15:26].
 - This use of neuter pronouns to refer to the Holy Spirit is due to the fact that the Greek word for spirit is πνεῦμα (pneuma) which is a neuter noun.
 - Given that this refers to the Holy Spirit, we will capitalize both instances of the word “he” in this verse.
 - The phrase “is taken out of the way” is literally “comes out from among you”.
 - Given that the restraining ministry of God the Holy Spirit is the focus here, this NASB translation is quite good.
- Principles of 2nd Thessalonians 2:6-7
 - The Holy Spirit, just like the Father and the Son, is omnipresent [Psalm 139:7-8; Jer 23:23-24].
 - However, He has a particular presence on earth through His indwelling of every Church-age believer [1 Cor 3:16; 6:19].
 - That presence holds in check the lawlessness which exists today because the spirit of the Antichrist is already here [1 John 4:2-3].
 - The Antichrist himself will not come to prominence until that restraining presence is removed from the earth [v. 8].
 - This will take place when the Church is removed from the earth at the Rapture event [1 Thess 4:16-17].
 - This passage confirms the pre-Trib Rapture because the Rapture will precede the revealing of the man of lawlessness which will precede the Day of the Lord [v. 3].
 - This logical conclusion is true regardless of the translation of **ἀποστασία** (apostasia) in verse 3.
 - When the presence of the Holy Spirit is removed and the Antichrist comes to prominence, the lawlessness on earth will intensify [vv. 9-10].
 - Satan is behind all lawlessness – the present mystery of lawlessness and the future lawlessness of the Antichrist.

- The Lawless One Revealed [2:8-10]

- Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will put to death with the breath of His mouth

καὶ τότε ἀποκαλυφθήσεται ὁ ἄνομος, ὃν ὁ κύριος [Ἰησοῦς] ἀνελεῖ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ

- The word “then” introduces something that follows in time indicating that this passage is a sequence of events.
- After the Restrainer is taken out of the way, the lawless one will be revealed.
- The phrase “that lawless one” refers to the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction [v. 3].
- This is one of many terms used to refer to the Antichrist.
- The word “revealed” is from **ἀποκαλύπτω** (apokaluptō) which we saw before to mean his coming to prominence.
- While he may already be alive when the Restrainer is taken away, he will live in relative obscurity until after that event occurs.
- The word “slay” is from **ἀναιρέω** (anaireō) which means “do away with” or “destroy”.
- This word describes getting rid of someone by execution, so we will translate this as “put to death” [Lk 23:32; Acts 10:39; 12:2].
- The phrase “the breath of His mouth” refers to the power of the Lord to accomplish this [Job 15:30; Psalm 33:6].
- The usage here is reflective of other similar phrases [Isa 11:4; Rev 2:18; 19:15].
- There is a text question here in that some manuscripts include the word Ἰησοῦς (Iēsous) here, which is the name “Jesus”.
- As with almost every text question, this verse means the exact same thing with or without this word.
- and bring him and his works to an end by the spectacular appearance of His coming; καὶ καταργήσει τὴν ἐπιφανείαν τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ,
- The phrase “bring to an end” is from **καταργέω** (katargeō) which means “abolish” or “wipe out”.
- This word indicates that not only will the Antichrist be put to death, but all that he was trying to accomplish during the Tribulation will be brought to an end when Jesus returns.
- The word “appearance” is from **ἐπιφάνεια** (epiphaneia) which means “appearing” or “appearance”.
- This word is used here to describe the spectacular appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ at the 2nd Advent.

- the coming *of the lawless one* is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,
οὗ ἐστιν ἡ παρουσία κατ' ἐνέργειαν τοῦ σατανᾶ ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει καὶ σημείοις καὶ τέρασιν ψεύδους
 - The phrase “the one whose coming” is a reference to the coming of the man of lawlessness.
 - We will retranslate this phrase in order to make this read more clearly.
 - The phrase “in accord with the activity of Satan” tells us that everything the Antichrist does lines up with Satan’s agenda.
 - Satan will be actively working in and through the Antichrist and all those who follow him.
 - Satan will empower the Antichrist to display counterfeit...
 - power (various miracles)
 - signs (miracles that emphasize some important point)
 - false wonders (miracles that produce awe in people)
- and with every unrighteous deception among those who perish,
καὶ ἐν πάσῃ ἀπάτῃ ἀδικίας τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις,
 - The phrase “all the deception of wickedness” is literally “every deception of unrighteousness”.
 - We will translate this as “every unrighteous deception” because it is clearly describing the basic modus operandi of Satan.
 - The phrase “for those who perish” is a dative construct of the word ἀπόλλυμι (apollumi) which means “be ruined” or “perish”.
 - This dative is locative, and this phrase indicates where the unrighteous deception was taking place, so we will translate this as “among those who perish”.
- because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.
ἀνθ' ὧν τὴν ἀγάπην τῆς ἀληθείας οὐκ ἐδέξαντο εἰς τὸ σωθῆναι αὐτοὺς.
 - The word “because” is ἀνθ' ὧν (anth' hōn) which is a special case of ἀντί (anti) which means “because”.
 - What follows is the reason why these people perish.
 - The phrase “they did not receive the love of the truth” means that these people rejected the truth.
 - They very well may have heard the truth, but they did not receive (accept) it.
 - These people perish because they prefer to believe the lies of the Antichrist rather than accept the truth of the gospel.
 - They will be so impressed with his power, signs and false wonders that they will believe his outright deception.
 - The phrase “so as to be saved” is literally “leading to their salvation”.
 - This makes it clear that the truth they reject is the truth of the gospel – salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

- Principles of 2nd Thessalonians 2:8-10
 - At the present time, the Holy Spirit, who indwells every born-again believer, is the Restrainer of evil on earth.
 - The mystery of lawlessness, which already exists today, is held in check by the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ.
 - After the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth at the Rapture of the Church, the Antichrist will come to prominence and unleash lawlessness upon the earth [Dan 11:36-45].
 - When Jesus Christ returns in spectacular fashion at the 2nd Advent [Matt 24:29-31], He will put the Antichrist (and his followers) to death [Rev 19:19-21].
 - At that time, all of the evil which the Antichrist will have purposed to do will be brought to an end as well.
 - In God's permissive will, Satan has the power to bring about miracles [Exod 7:8-22].
 - Satan will use counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders to bring the Antichrist to prominence [Rev 13:11-15].
 - The power of Satan will enable the Antichrist to exert his authority over the people of the earth [Rev 13:3-7].
 - Unbelievers during the Tribulation will fall for Satan's lies and worship the Antichrist [Rev 13:8].
 - These unbelievers, just like unbelievers today, will be blinded by the deception of Satan and will not accept the gospel so as to be saved [1 Cor 1:18; 2 Cor 4:3-4].
 - This follows Satan's pattern which is to work directly against God's desire to see all people get saved [1 Tim 2:3-4].
 - The simple truth of the gospel [Acts 4:12] will be veiled by Satan who will attempt to exalt his counterfeit "trinity".

- The Deluding Influence [2:11-12]

- Consequently, God will send upon them a powerful delusion with the result that they will believe the lie,

καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πέμπει αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς ἐνέργειαν πλάνης εἰς τὸ πιστεῦσαι αὐτοὺς τῷ ψεύδει,

- The phrase “For this reason” is literally “because of this”.
- When we include the **καὶ** (kai) at the beginning of this sentence, we get “And because of this” which we will translate as “Consequently,”.
- The phrase “God will send upon them” refers back to “those who perish” [v. 10] because they have rejected the truth of the gospel.
- This does not refer to people who have never heard the gospel or those who have heard it and remain open to its message.
- The phrase “a deluding influence” is literally “an active, powerful delusion”.
- This active, powerful delusion which comes from God builds upon the negative volition which already exists in their hearts.
- The phrase “so that” is **εἰς** (eis) plus the articular infinitive of **πιστεύω** (pisteuō).
- This construct describes a result, so we will translate this as “with the result that”.
- The phrase “what is false” is literally “the lie”.
- This refers to the lie (every unrighteous deception – v. 10) perpetrated by Satan through the Antichrist and the false prophet.
- in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but instead took pleasure in unrighteousness.
ἵνα κριθῶσιν πάντες οἱ μὴ πιστεύσαντες τῇ ἀληθείᾳ ἀλλὰ εὐδοκῆσαντες τῇ ἀδικίᾳ.
- The phrase “in order that” is **ἵνα** (hina) which denotes purpose, aim or goal.
- This tells us that what follows is God’s purpose in sending the powerful delusion upon the perishing ones.
- The phrase “they all may be judged who did not believe the truth” brings into view an extensive group of people.
- This includes people who reject the gospel prior to the Rapture as well as those who do so afterwards.
- This tells us that the powerful delusion from God will cause most, if not all, of those who are alive during the Tribulation and have rejected the gospel to never believe.
- This is a unique occurrence only during the Tribulation.
- Note that this verse describes active disbelief, not ignorance of the gospel.
- This phrase is in the past tense here because it is relative to the time period of the Tribulation.
- The word “but” is **ἀλλὰ** (alla) which forms a sharp contrast with what precedes it.
- We will translate this as “but instead”.
- The word “wickedness” is from **ἀδικία** (adikia) which means “unrighteousness” or “wickedness”.
- This word describes all sorts of wrongdoing including acts of injustice.

- Principles of 2nd Thessalonians 2:11-12
 - While God desires that none should perish [2 Pet 3:9], He does not force people to believe and some will reject Him.
 - After Pharaoh chose to harden his own heart [Ex 8:15, 32], God hardened Pharaoh's heart [Ex 10:1, 20].
 - In a similar way, God has partially hardened the hearts of the Jewish people during the present age [Rom 11:25].
 - During the Tribulation, God will send a powerful deluding influence upon those who have chosen to reject Him.
 - This will include people who actively rejected the gospel prior to the Rapture as well as those who do so afterwards.
 - This deluding influence will cause these unbelievers to buy into Satan's lie regarding the Antichrist [v. 4].
 - These unbelievers choose to take pleasure in unrighteousness instead of believing God's truth and this deluding influence gives them over to more of what they already want [Rom 1:18-32].
 - Their freewill choice to indulge the lusts of their flesh rather than trusting in God's remedy for the sin problem results in judgment and, ultimately, the Lake of Fire [Rev 20:11-15] as they are held accountable for their choices [Rom 1:20].